

In the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently amended) ~~The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising~~ An apparatus for a service node used in a multimedia network comprising:

a data distributor circuit;

a data port adapted to couple with a data stream, said data distributor circuit having a relational code adapted to determine whether an address field of a data packet from said data stream is intended for local distribution by said distributor circuit, wherein said data port is operably coupled to said data distributor circuit;

a decoder in communication with said distributor circuit, said decoder having a virtual channel filter for filtering said address field to route said data packet to at least one data port; and

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an incorporator circuit electrically-coupled to said data port adapted to insert an address value having a relational code and a virtual channel code in a data input from said at least one data port, said incorporator adapted to insert said data input into said data stream.

3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 2 wherein said incorporator circuit is operably coupled with said decoder adapted to receive said data input.

4. (Currently amended) The apparatus of claim 3 wherein said incorporator circuit ~~comprises a Field Programmable Gate Array~~ is adapted to execute a firmware routine adapted to insert said address value into said data input and adapted to insert said data input into said data stream.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Cancelled)

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Currently amended) ~~The multimedia network card of claim 7 further comprising:~~ A multimedia network card comprising:

a deserializer coupled to a serial data stream, said deserializer adapted to convert said serial data stream to a parallel data stream representing a plurality of data of said serial data stream;

a receiver coupled to said deserializer, said receiver having a relational code adapted to determine whether an address field of said parallel data stream designates local distribution;

a decoder in communication with said receiver, said decoder having a virtual channel filter adapted to filter said address field to route said data packet to at least one data port; and

a serializer coupled to said receiver, said serializer adapted to convert an output data stream from said receiver into an output serial data stream;

an incorporator coupled to said decoder, said incorporator adapted to insert an address value having a relational code and a virtual channel code in a data input from said at least one data port, said incorporator adapted to insert said data input into said data stream; and

a second serializer coupled to said receiver, said second serializer adapted to convert an output data stream from said receiver into an output serial data stream.

9. (Original) The multimedia network card of claim 8 further comprising a second deserializer coupled to said incorporator and said serial data stream, said second deserializer adapted to convert a parallel data stream into a serial data stream such that said incorporator is adapted to provide a redundant receiver function to said receiver.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Cancelled)

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Cancelled)

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Cancelled)